

OPERA SEASON OPENS TO-MORROW NIGHT WITH A NOVELTY

By W. J. HENDERSON.

WHEN the records of musical doings in this town finished at 11:45 last night had taken account of 112 musical performances given since the season opened. This would be regarded as a fair total for an entire season in some smaller cities.

Nevertheless it is entirely safe to say that the great majority of those amiable people who devoutly believe in their own love for good music have yet been aware of the existence of a single one of these musical performances and are convinced that the season begins to-morrow evening.

Among the chroniclers of musical doings it is an old jest that on the day when opera opens its reverberating joys all their friends come smiling up to them and exclaim, "Well, now your busy season begins."

Precisely and writing the news of twenty-five musical entertainments instigated in one week does not constitute occupation. Nothing makes a more popular busy except opera. For in the mind of the amiable person who thinks himself a music lover because he shows himself once or twice a week at the Metropolitan there is no music but opera, and Caruso is its prophet.

Therefore let it be known to all men by these presents that the busy season of opera begins at the Metropolitan Opera House to-morrow evening, and that it is the inexorable and merciless purpose of the stern and unyielding master Gatti-Casazza to compel the unfortunate subscribers to listen to more of what they do not know.

Music fans used to say that all he had to do to make sure of a small audience was to put on a new opera. If he had press seed the stoicism of the immovable Mr. Gatti—he would have perceived that the audience of the opening night was a "sure thing" and an easy mark. People will go to the best performance of opera no matter what happens.

That being the case, if a manager desires to produce a novelty and to make sure of a good audience for it, anomaly the thing to do is give it at the opening night. Mr. Gatti—you must have heard me, reader, that they say the rest of it is at the opera house. Mr. Gatti will give "Dudu's Les Poulardes Perles." Very good. You are going to the opening performance? Yes? Then you will hear at least a part of it. You are permitted to go home after the first act if you don't like it.

However, this is not at all likely to be your course of action. For Mr. Gatti has carefully provided a cast which will hold you for at least one more act. Mr. Caruso is going to sing. You will be able to see him in the very act. He will not be allowed to play you any tricks, as he has sometimes done when he sang the serenade behind the scene in "Pagliacci," and you thought it was Bada.

No, he will be behind the footlights all night long. Frieda Hempel (who wants to give some sound advice to the President when she has time) will also be there. She will sing the music which was once sung here by Emma Calvé. Two acts of the opera were on twenty years ago with the incomparable French artist in the prima donna soprano role. But that is ancient history, and the most absolute authority in the Metropolitan Opera House told the writer and numerous other people many times over that we New Yorkers never had any good sense here till Mr. Gatti came.

Thomas, isn't it? History is such a small number. Why, that's right. "Les Amours de Perle," although Melba was singing *Lieder*, the most popular waxes were "Carmen," "Faust," "Lohengrin," and "Tristan und Isolde." In the latter the principals were Julian Norden, Marie Brema and the terrible Grosvenor. Foolish old history, to think that unearthing your dusty records will convince any of the connoisseurs of musical powers that New York still had operas in those days!

Close the work books. Let the dead past bury its dead. To-morrow evening you shall hear Caruso and Hempele, and on Wednesday you may hear Caruso and Isolde with Kurt, Ursus, Weil and Braun, and Thursday "Manon Lescaut" with Alda and the only Caruso. The chorus and orchestra and stage will be excellent.

In the November number of the *Art World* a new publication which deserves the attention of every serious student of culture, is the following definition of predestination of doctrine:

"There are two kinds of charlatanism in the world of art—charlatanism in art production and charlatanism in self-advertising."

During the delusive choice of a life to the representation of which the future time immemorial has decided by an sane and self-respecting society.

The conception and composition of art did not occur in a spirit that is either incomprehensible or unrefined, but rather, with a sense sufficiently amenable to make it amenable to the law.

Then the execution of any composition in forms so far removed from the normal forms as to be shocking to normal people, and all done for the purpose of attracting public attention to the artist and his work.

Charlatanism in self-advertising means the deliberate misleading of the public by a refined or coarse hypocrisies or ignorances, carried on by fulminating a story or writing in newspapers, magazines or books, to lead the public to believe that a new, absurd, shocking or bad work of art, or series of art, is really good and to the interest of society."

To use that perfectly delightful and



ETHEL HEANEY, WHO WILL GIVE A PIANO RECITAL AT THE COMEDY THEATRE THIS AFTERNOON. *Photo by M. M. MANNIN*



FRIEDA HEMPEL OMISKAIR

shake or "split the ears of groundlings."

Opera singers cannot be blamed for following the venerable methods of their profession. But be not deceived. EVIL COMMUNISTS corrupt good manners. Since Anna Maranini was taken to Paris to create the soprano role in Cavalli's operas, or perhaps even a few years further back, when Leonora Baroni was tenderly carried thither by the Cardinal Mazarin to impersonate *Eurydice* in the "Orfeo" of Luigi Rossi, the traditions of the operatic world have sanctioned the belief that the singer is the real high priest of art, not the composer.

But it is not true. It is a piece of charlatanism. The delineation of principles which strives to make the public believe the doctrine is a part of the charlatanism. Every great interpretive artist is a necessary minister of music. We cannot do without them.

But let us demand of them that they remember that they are ministers, not deities.

METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE.

General Manager Gatti-Casazza has announced the following repertoire for the opening week of the Metropolitan opera season of 1916-17. It will include one French opera, one Russian, two Italian and two German.

Bizet's "Les Pecheurs de Perles," which virtually is a novelty here—only two acts of the work have been given in New York on a single occasion, a matinee, Jan. 11, 1896, with Calvet.

In addition, "Wozzeck," a contemporary opera, deservedly the most beautiful piece of art, "possibly moved the entire theatre to tears."

And behold the fame of the singer of this aria liveth even unto this day, for she was known then by her professional title: "La Florida," and her real name was Virginia Andreini. We do not know her salary.

From that time on we find singer worship and singer feats of technique more and more in evidence till before the end of the seventeenth century opera was in effect a vocal concerto, in which every singer on the stage was engaged in an exhibition of skill in agility.

Expression also existed, but it was limited to the pathetic. The furtive tear of the auditor was caused down the sensitive cheek. Gentle melancholy, restrained sorrow, mournful resignation and similar emotions were usually communicated in the slow arias, the "lonesome" style of opera down to the Handelian period. Hope and despair could be indicated by rapid, agitated music of the "furibondo" type, but this too furnished its opportunity for the haranguer style.

"Tristan and Isolde" on Wednesday evening with Mimes, Kurt and Homer and Messrs. Ursus, Weil, Braun, Schlegel, Reiss, Bloch, and Beyer. Arthur Bodenbach will conduct.

"Manon Lescaut" on Thursday evening with Mimes, Alda and Perini and Messrs. Caruso, Scotti, De Segurado, Rossi, Reiss, Bada, Audisio and Reschiglian. Gennaro Papi will make his debut as a conductor here.

"Der Rosenkavalier" on Friday evening with Mimes, Kurt and Homer and Messrs. Ursus, Weil, Braun, Schlegel, Reiss, Bloch, and Beyer. Rudolf Bodenbach conducting.

"Prince Igor" at the Saturday matinee with Mimes, Alda, Perini, De Segurado and Messrs. Ursus, Weil, Braun, Schlegel, Reiss, Bloch, and Beyer. Arturo Bodenbach conducting.

"Tristan und Isolde" on Sunday evening with Mimes, Kurt and Homer and Messrs. Ursus, Weil and Braun.

"Manon Lescaut" on Monday evening with Alda, Perini, De Segurado, Rossi, Reiss, Bada, Audisio and Reschiglian. Gennaro Papi will conduct.

"Aida" will play.

"Boris Godunoff" will open the Brooklyn opera season at the Brooklyn Academy of Music on Tuesday evening, Nov. 14. It will be sung by Mimes, Ober, Delaunay, Sparks, Howard and Mattfeld and Messrs. Didor, Rother, De Segurado, Althouse, Bada, Reschiglian, Rossi, Schlegel, Bloch and Audisio. Mr. Polacco will conduct.

Ethel Heaney, a young American pianist, will give a recital this afternoon in the Comedy Theatre.

The programme follows: Etudes, minor, C major, opus 53; Beethoven's nocturne, E major; prelude, opus 25, No. 19; étude, C flat; scherzo, C sharp minor; Chopin's concert arabesques, on motifs by Johann Strauss; "By the Beautiful Blue Danube," Schubert's Zeyer.

Gaston Dethier, pianist, and Edward Dethier, violinist, will give their first sonata recital of the present season this evening in the Comedy Theatre.

The works to be presented are Dohnanyi's sharp minor sonata, opus 10; the sonata of Brahms in G, opus 78, and Pierne's D minor sonata.

Yvette Guilbert, at her concert this evening in the Maxine Elliott Theatre,

The Philharmonic Society will give the first concert in its Sunday series this afternoon in Carnegie Hall. Josef Hofmann will be the soloist. An all-Beethoven programme will be presented, including the "Eroica" symphony and the "Leonore" overture. Mr. Hofmann will play the "Emperor" concerto. At the next pair of concerts, on Thursday evening, November 16, and Friday afternoon, November 17, Schubert's C major symphony, Debussy's "Méphisto" and "Danse Macabre," and Stravinsky's "Rite of Spring," which has never been heard at these concerts will be offered.

In memory of Max Reger, who died during the past summer, the orchestra will play the composer's "Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Mozart."

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SATURDAY, Nov. 16, at 8:15 P. M.—"Aida," Mmes. Rappold and Homer, Messrs. Martinelli, De Luca and Rother.

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